

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 091258Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7060

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 10143

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, IR

SUBJ: INDIAN VIEW OF PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) NEW DELHI 9132 (B) NEW DELHI 9734

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY (PAK-AFGHAN) I.P. SINGH, TOLD POLCOUNSELOR JULY 9 THAT DURING PM GANDHI'S VISIT TO KABUL THIS WEEK, INDIANS HAD GATHERED THAT DAUD AND GOA WERE PLEASED WITH OUTCOME OF DAUD/BHUTTO TALKS, HOPEFUL, BUT UNCERTAIN HOW THE DIALOGUE WOULD PROGRESS. AFGHANS WERE PARTICULARLY GRATIFIED BY BHUTTO'S INITIATIVE TO VISIT AFGHANISTAN, BY CESSATION OF HOSTILE PROPAGANDA, AND BY GENERAL TONE OF BHUTTO'S REMARKS WHILE HE WAS IN AFGHANISTAN. THEY ARE, HOWEVER, WARY OF WHETHER BHUTTO WILL AT SOME POINT SHIFT GEARS, WHETHER DOMESTIC PAKISTAN POLITICS WILL EXERT NEW PRESSURES ON HIM, AND ARE COMPLETELY UNSURE ABOUT NEXT STEP THAT BHUTTO MAY HAVE IN MIND TO MOVE THE PAK-AFGHAN DIALOGUE FORWARD.

2. SINGH SAID INDIANS HAD TOLD AFGHANS DURING PM'S

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VISIT THAT THEY SUPPORTED STEPS TAKEN BY DAUD AND BHUTTO.

PAKS HAD TOLD INDIANS THEY PLANNED TO DISCUSS TRANSIT TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN WITH AFGHANS SEPARATELY, AND INDIANS HAD SUGGESTED TO AFGHANS THAT THEY DEFER THEIR OWN DISCUSSIONS ON THIS UNTIL GOP HAD MADE ITS APPROACH TO GOA.

3. SINGH SAID IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THAT ALTHOUGH AFGHANS INSIST THEY WOULD NOT JOIN ENLARGED RCD, THEY ARE NOT COMPLETELY OPPOSED TO CONCEPT OF REGIONAL COOPERATION IN DIFFERENT CONTEXT. SINGH SUGGESTED THAT SOME NEW AND DIFFERENT GROUPING TO INCLUDE BANGLADESH, NEPAL, PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN AND IRAN MIGHT BE MORE PALATABLE TO THE AFGHANS SINCE IT WOULD BE OUT OF THE RCD/CENTO FRAMEWORK WHICH MAKES THE AFGHANS NERVOUS.

4. SO FAR AS BILATERAL INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS WERE CONCERNED, SINGH SHRUGGED AND SAID THERE WAS LITTLE TO DISCUSS AND THE BULK OF THE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN MRS GANDHI AND DAUD REVOLVED AROUND THEIR RESPECTIVE EXPLANATIONS OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES.

5. SINGH SAID THAT GOI VIEW OF PAK-AFGHAN DIALOGUE WAS THAT THE PROSPECTS LOOKED SOMEWHAT BRIGHTER THAN THE INDIANS HAD ASSESSED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, BUT THEY WERE STILL UNCERTAIN THAT THE AGE-OLD MOUNTAIN TRIBE PROBLEM WOULD PROVE TRACTABLE. DAUD INDEED HAD FALLEN BACK CONSIDERABLY FROM HIS 1975 AND PREVIOUS HARD-LINE ON PUSHTUNISTAN, AND SINGH SAID ANYONE WHO STILL THOUGHT ABOUT THAT IDEA WAS A FOOL AND A DREAMER. NEVERTHELESS THERE WERE REAL PROBLEMS INVOLVING THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PUSHTU AND BALUCH TRIBES ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE BORDER OR WHO MIGRATED BACK AND FORTH AND THE AFGHAN AND PAK GOVERNMENTS AND IT WAS STILL TOO EARLY TO SAY WHETHER THE DAUD/BHUTTO TALKS WOULD PAVE THE WAY TO ANY LONG-TERM SOLUTION. INDIAN DCM-DESIGNATE TO ISLAMABAD, KIRIN DOSHI, TOOK EVEN MORE CYNICAL VIEW OF PROSPECTS FOR RESOLUTION OF DISPUTE IN CON ERSATION WITH POLCOUNSELOR JULY 9.

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